

1. A sharps disposal container comprising:

a base having a bottom wall and a sidewall extending upwardly from said bottom wall defining a receptacle for receiving sharps;

5 a top having an aperture therethrough connected to an upper portion of said side wall;

a closure hingedly connected to said top and capable of moving to and from an open position which allows access to said aperture for placing sharps in said receptacle and a closed position covering said aperture wherein said closure releasably engages said top; and

10 a gripping tab hingedly connected to said closure and projecting upwardly from said closure when said closure is in said closed position, for moving said closure to said open position, and means for locking said closure to said top when said gripping tab is moved to a downwardly directed position and said closure is moved to said closed position.

15

2. The sharps disposal container of claim 1 wherein said means for locking includes a discontinuity on said gripping tab configured to engage a discontinuity on said top.

20 3. The sharps disposal container of claim 2 wherein said discontinuity on said gripping tab is a projection and said discontinuity on said top is a projection.

4. The sharps disposal container of claim 2 wherein said discontinuity on said gripping tab is a projection and said discontinuity on said lid is an aperture positioned  
25 so that when said closure is moved to said closed position a portion of said gripping tab containing said projection is forced through said aperture.

5. The sharps disposal container of claim 1 having at least one secondary locking structure to lock said closure to said top when said closure is in said closed position  
30 and said gripping tab is in said downwardly directed position.

6. The sharps disposal container of claim 5 wherein said at least one secondary locking structure includes a discontinuity on said closure configured for locking engagement with a discontinuity on said top.

5

7. The sharps disposal container of claim 5 wherein said secondary locking structure is a flexible projection on said closure and a ledge on said lid positioned for engaging said flexible projection.

10 8. The sharps disposal container of claim 5 wherein said at least one secondary locking structure comprises two secondary locking structures.

9. The sharps disposal container of claim 8 wherein said two secondary locking structures are positioned on opposite sides of said closure.

15

10. The sharps disposal container of claim 1 wherein said aperture includes a plurality of downwardly facing flexible fingers for helping to keep sharps in said receptacle.

20 11. The sharps disposal container of claim 1 wherein said top includes at least one elongate port for needle removal, said at least one port being covered by said closure when said closure is in said closed position.

25 12. The sharps disposal container of claim 1 wherein said upper portion of said side wall includes an outwardly curved rim and said top includes a rim around its periphery wherein said rim of said base and said rim of said top are configured to engage each other in an interference fit for sealing engagement between said top and said base.

13. The sharps disposal container of claim 12 wherein said top is held to said base in a snap-fit arrangement achieved by a plurality of inwardly directed projections on said rim of said top engaging said rim of said base.

5 14. The sharps disposal container of claim 12 wherein said base includes a carry handle flexibly connected to said base and having a rest position along a front wall of said base and pivotable to a position over said top when lifted upwardly.

10 15. The sharps disposal container of claim 14 wherein said handle and said base are integrally molded of thermoplastic material.

15 16. The sharps disposable container of claim 14 wherein said rim of said top and said rim of said base are configured so that said top can only engage said base in an orientation where said gripping tab is closer to said front wall of said base.

17. The sharps disposal container of claim 5 wherein said top and said closure including said gripping tab and said secondary locking structure are integrally molded of thermoplastic material.

20 18. The sharps disposal container of claim 5 wherein said closure is hingedly connected to said top through a living hinge.

19. The sharps disposal container of claim 5 wherein said gripping tab is hingedly connected to said closure through a living hinge.

25 20. A sharps disposal container comprising:

a base having a bottom wall and a sidewall extending upwardly from said bottom wall defining a receptacle for receiving sharps;

30 a top having an aperture therethrough connected to an upper portion of said side wall;

a closure hingedly connected to said top and capable of moving to and from an open position which allows access to said aperture for placing sharps in said receptacle and a closed position covering said aperture wherein said closure releasably engages said lid;

5 a gripping tab hingedly connected to said closure and projecting upwardly from said closure when said closure is in said closed position for moving said closure to said open position, and a discontinuity on said gripping tab configured to engage a discontinuity on said top for locking said closure to said top when said gripping tab is moved to a downwardly directed position and said closure is moved to said closed  
10 position; and

at least one secondary locking structure to lock said closure to said top when said closure is in said closed position and said gripping tab is in its downwardly directed position.

15 21. The sharps disposal container of claim 20 wherein said secondary locking structure is a flexible projection on said closure and a ledge on said lid positioned for engaging said flexible projection.

20 22. The sharps disposal container of claim 20 wherein said at least one secondary locking structure comprises two secondary locking structures.

23. A sharps disposal container of claim 20 wherein said top and said closure including said gripping tab and said secondary locking structure are integrally molded of thermoplastic material.

25

24. A sharps disposal container comprising:

a base having a bottom wall and a sidewall extending upwardly from said bottom wall defining a receptacle for receiving sharps;

a top having an aperture therethrough connected to an upper portion of said sidewall, said aperture including a plurality of downwardly and inwardly facing fingers for helping to keep sharps in said receptacle;

5 said upper portion of said side wall including an outwardly curved rim and said top including a rim around its periphery wherein said rim of said base and said rim of said top are configured to engage each other in an interference fit for sealing engagement between said top and said base;

10 a closure hingedly connected to said top and capable of moving to and from an open position which allows access to said aperture for placing sharps in said receptacle and a closed position covering said aperture wherein said closure releasably engages said lid;

15 a gripping tab hingedly connected to said closure and projecting upwardly from said closure when said closure is in said closed position, for moving said closure to said open position, and a discontinuity on said gripping tab configured to engage a discontinuity on said top for locking said closure to said top when said gripping tab is moved to a downwardly directed position and said closure is moved to said closed position;

20 at least one secondary locking structure to lock said closure to said top when said closure is in said closed position and said gripping tab is in its downwardly directed position; and

said top and said closure including said gripping tab and said secondary locking structure being integrally molded of thermoplastic material.